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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 001245

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EZ](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: CZECHS ON SEPTEMBER 1-2 GYMnich POINTS

REF: A. STATE 153187

[1](#)B. PRAGUE 1243

Classified By: Pol-Econ Counselor Michael Dodman for reasons 1.4 b+d

[1](#)1. (C) Pol-Econ Chief met August 25 with Czech MFA Director for CFSP Issues, Petr Kaiser, to discuss ref A points in advance of the September 1-2 EU Foreign Ministers Gymnich meeting. Kaiser noted that HMG had not yet circulated a final agenda for the meeting, but he expects it will cover most of the topics covered by the US points. He offered the following comments.

A) Turkey: making clear that enlargement is not a CFSP issue within his competence, Kaiser offered his own thoughts to supplement those of his colleagues focused on EU affairs (ref B). Kaiser said Czech MFA officials appreciate the strategic reason for "including Turkey in Europe" and following through on the EU's repeated promises to Turkey. But he also reviewed the challenges the EU is facing since the constitution referendum defeats. In the end, Kaiser believes the decision on what to do with Turkey in October will be made not by Foreign Ministers (and he personally expects little fruitful discussion of this topic at the Gymnich) but by Prime Ministers and Presidents balancing their domestic political concerns with the strategic importance of Turkey.

B) Iraq: Kaiser said that, "as a coalition member," the CR will be pushing for a more active EU role in Iraq, including the opening of an EC office in Baghdad. The Czechs hope that the final completion of the constitution will provide the momentum necessary to expand EU activity. But the Czechs are not pushing for any specific EU steps at this point.

C) Iran: Kaiser described Czech thinking as squarely in line with the U.S., terming the CR one of the few "hardliners" within the EU.

D) China: Kaiser took the opportunity to restate the CR's opinion on the Chinese arms embargo: human rights improvements remain essential before the embargo is lifted; lifting of the embargo should not result in any increase in exports of destabilizing military material, and therefore an effective toolbox is much better than the unevenly-applied "embargo;" and the EU's strategic dialogue with the US and Asian partners needs to continue. Kaiser, who also oversees export licensing and was instrumental in efforts last year to cancel the planned sale of the sensitive VERA-E radar to China, insisted that the Czechs intend to play a constructive role in the internal EU debate on the arms embargo, and expressed satisfaction that it was no longer on a fast track.

MUNTER